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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

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21 June 1965

Dear Jim:

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Attached is the letter sent USIB by DNRO laying out the general KH-4 [redacted] FY 66 launch programs.

Would like to discuss this program plus NRO "requirements" with regard to 14/229 with you at your convenience. Then, if you think it is appropriate, I would be glad to have a session with the COMOR.

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Sincerely,

[redacted]
Brigadier General, USAF
Director, NRO Staff

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NRO review(s)
completed.

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Mr. James Reber
Chairman, USIB Committee on Overhead
Reconnaissance
Central Intelligence Agency

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16 JUN 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN, USIB

SUBJECT: Requirements for Present Satellite Image-Forming Sensors

Reference is made to USIB-D-41.14/229, as approved at the 24 March and 14 April USIB meetings.

I have deferred the NRO's response to this document for several weeks, in anticipation of early receipt from the COMOR of specific target decks for the KH-4 [] surveillance objectives. These decks have not yet been received. I understand that some adjustments are being made in the priorities and frequencies set forth in Tab A of the basic paper which will delay still further COMOR's assembly of the detailed target requirements.

Because of the relatively long lead times associated with the manufacture and preparation of payloads, spacecraft, and boosters, the NRO had to make reasonably firm and final program and budgetary decisions for FY 1966 approximately six months ago. Fortunately, it was possible to base those decisions to a large degree on NRO analyses of the draft predecessors to 41.14/229. We understand informally that the adjustments now being contemplated to Tab A of that document do not change the KH-4 requirements []

[] In either case, the NRO appears to be in a position to respond to USIB's needs in the year ahead.

The purpose of this memorandum is to apprise the Board of the basic KH-4 [] launch programs the NRO will undertake in FY 66 in response to the requirements of 41.14/229. This basic program should fulfill a large majority of the stated search and surveillance requirements. As will be noted, some reserve of KH-4 [] systems will also be available should the requirements increase or unforeseen emergencies arise.

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Prior to describing the launch program, let me first commend the COMOR on their product. This document represents the first comprehensive set of KH-4 [] requirements ever compiled, and it should be most helpful both to the NRO and the Intelligence Community. It provides a firm basis, long needed, on which the NRO can plan and conduct an orderly and efficient operational program to meet USIB's needs. I am sure it will also be most useful to the USIB in its continuing assessment of intelligence requirements and accomplishments.

There follow specific comments on various portions of D-41.14/229 and a brief description of the operational program the NRO will pursue in Fiscal Year 1966 toward the stated requirements.

Search and Surveillance (KH-4):

Based upon past experience and NRO operational analyses, I generally share the COMOR view that [redacted] KH-4 missions devoted to the purpose will fulfill a large majority of the recurring search and surveillance requirements in the Sino-Soviet Bloc. To achieve [redacted] [redacted] KH-4 [redacted] missions should require [redacted] launches during the twelve month period. It is necessary to speak in terms of equivalents, since past experience has shown that some of the missions will be only partial successes in that they will not achieve their planned lifetimes on orbit.

The NRO therefore has scheduled [] KH-4 launches in FY 1966. To optimize returns, the launches should occur at []

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KH-4 system will be available at an R-7 status, for use either in a crisis situation or as a back-up to a total mission failure in one [redacted] regularly scheduled launches.

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Mapping and Charting (KH-4):

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Besides [redacted] search and surveillance KH-4's discussed above, [redacted] KH-4's have been allocated against the stated mapping and charting requirements. The launch schedule for these two missions will be established at a later date; however, for planning purposes we assume [redacted]

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As a matter of interest, the Pan Reseau modification will be flown early in CY 1966. If this capability is as successful as anticipated, it should improve the mapping, charting, and geodesy from regular KH-4 missions without degrading the quality of search/surveillance photography.

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Standby KH-4 [] Missions:

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A requirement is stated in USIB 14/229 that additional KH-4 [] vehicles should be available to meet periods of international tension.

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This requirement will be met without difficulty in the KH-4 program. A modest "reserve" has been acquired, and five to six systems are continually in preparation somewhere between R-38 and R-0. As many as [] systems could be launched in a two month period, and lead times are such that a [] rate could be continued almost indefinitely. At least one KH-4 system is in an R-7 status at all times. Further, the KH-4 has demonstrated its capability to hold in an R-1 status for reasonably long intervals.

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Program Progress During the Year:

The NRO will follow the program outlined above starting 1 July (essentially, we are on such a schedule now). In this regard, it is urged that the target decks for 14/229 be completed and forwarded to the NRO as soon as possible. It is further suggested that, at approximately two month intervals throughout the year, the Board review NRO progress toward meeting the search, surveillance, and technical surveillance requirements.

Signed

Brockway McMillan
Director

National Reconnaissance Office

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